

AA -- 6. The method according to claim 1, wherein said connective tissue cells are fibroblast cells, osteoblasts, or chondrocytes. --

Please replace claim 17, with the following amended claim 17:

AS -- 17. The connective tissue cell line according to claim 16, wherein said connective tissue cell line is a fibroblast cell line, a chondrocyte cell line, an osteoblast cell line, or an osteocyte cell line. --

REMARKS

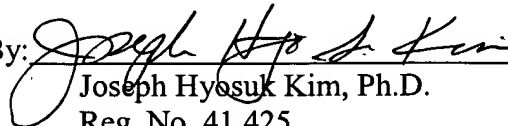
Claims 1-22 are pending in the application. The amendments to the specification and the claims serve to further clarify the present invention. No new matter has been inserted into the application. Accordingly, entry of the amendments to the application is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 07-1853 during the pendency of prosecution of this application. Should such additional fees be associated with an extension of time, applicant respectfully requests that this paper be considered a petition therefor. A duplicate of this paper is enclosed for the Deposit Account, should it be needed.

Respectfully submitted,

SQUIRE, SANDERS & DEMPSEY L.L.P.

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VERSION MARKED TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Specification:

On page 5, starting at line 5, please amend the following paragraph as follows:

The connective tissue cells include, but are not limited to, fibroblast cells, [mesenchymal cells,] osteoblasts, or chondrocytes. The fibroblast cells may be NIH 3T3 cells or human foreskin fibroblast cells.

On page 5, starting at line 28, please amend the following paragraph as follows:

The present invention is also directed to a connective tissue cell line comprising a recombinant viral or plasmid vector comprising a DNA sequence encoding a member of the transforming growth factor superfamily. The connective tissue cell line may include, but is not limited to, a fibroblast cell line, [a mesenchymal cell line,] a chondrocyte cell line, an osteoblast cell line, or an osteocyte cell line. The fibroblast cell line may be a human foreskin fibroblast cell line or NIH 3T3 cell line.

On page 9, starting at line 4, please amend the following paragraph as follows:

As used herein, the term "connective tissue cell" or "cell of a connective tissue" include cells that are found in the connective tissue, such as fibroblasts, cartilage cells (chondrocytes), and bone cells (osteoblasts/ osteocytes), which secrete collagenous extracellular matrix, as well as fat cells (adipocytes) and smooth muscle cells. Preferably, the connective tissue cells are fibroblasts, cartilage cells, and bone cells. More preferably, the connective tissue cells are fibroblast cells. [Connective tissue cells also include mesenchymal cells, which are also known as immature fibroblasts.] It will be recognized that the invention can be practiced with a mixed culture of connective tissue cells, as well as cells of a single type. It is also recognized that the

tissue cells may be treated such as by chemical or radiation so that the cells stably express the gene of interest, preferably TGF- β . Preferably, the connective tissue cell does not cause a negative immune response when injected into the host organism. It is understood that allogeneic cells may be used in this regard, as well as autologous cells for cell-mediated gene therapy or somatic cell therapy.

In the Claims

Please amend claim 6 as follows:

6. The method according to claim 1, wherein said connective tissue cells are fibroblast cells, [mesenchymal cells,] osteoblasts, or chondrocytes.

Please amend claim 17 as follows:

17. The connective tissue cell line according to claim 16, wherein said connective tissue cell line is a fibroblast cell line, [a mesenchymal cell line,] a chondrocyte cell line, an osteoblast cell line, or an osteocyte cell line.

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